

Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group
Meeting Minutes – February 22, 2016
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Government Center, Onamia

Attendance: Perry Bunting, MLBO DNRE; Sheila Carleton, Crow Wing SWCD; Al Close, Hazelton Township; Barb Eller, Mille Lacs SWCD Supervisor; Lynn Gallice, Mille Lacs SWCD; Bob Janzen, Aitkin Co SWCD Supervisor; Ted Kostecka, Kathio Township; Ray Lasher, GKWMLL Sanitary Sewer District; Janet Smude, Aitkin County SWCD; Jason Weirnerman, BWSR; Laurie Westerlund, Aitkin County Board; Chad Weiss, MLBO DNRE; Bob Williams, Round Lake.

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Secretary / Treasurer Bob Williams.
2. Administrative Details: An attendance sheet was circulated and introductions were made. The agenda was approved with the addition of an update on the Fisheries Input Group M/S/C Barb Eller / Laurie Westerlund. There was no pertinent correspondence.
3. Minutes from the December meeting of the Group were reviewed and approved as presented. M/S/C Laurie Westerlund / Barb Eller.
4. Financial Report: A report for the months of December 2015 and January 2016 was shared. Expenses totaled \$ 3,053.39 from the Clean Water Partnership Grant. They were related to educational events, stream water quality monitoring, coordination and administrative services. The report was approved as presented. M/S/C Laurie Westerlund /Barb Eller.
5. Community Incentive Program: Jason Weirnerman introduced himself and gave a summary of the role played by Board of Water and Soil Resources in Minnesota. BWSR provides oversight for soil and water resources and aid to local governments.
Lynn Gallice shared a summary of the Community Incentive Program she has been working on. A lake stewardship plan would be developed for each enrolled property – including what is good, and what could be improved. A checklist is being developed. After enrolling, participants would be recognized and develop a leadership role in the watershed / community. The need for continued contact and support was noted. A self assessment tool for landowners was mentioned. A motion approving a “Build out” and further development of the program was made M/S/C Barb Eller / Al Close.
6. Old Business:
 - 6.1. 2016 Media Campaign: Ideas for products that would support the Community Incentive Program were discussed. These included yard signs, mailbox wraps, window clings. These would include a recognizable logo, that would be related to the MLLWVG logo. Ideas will be shared with Aaron Hautala from Red House Media.
 - 6.2. Classroom Workshop Planning: Planning is still in the works for a kick off for the Lake Stewardship Program – featuring the MLLWVG accomplishments and a Forestry / Wildlife / Healthy Soils workshop this fall. Lynn Gallice, Janet Smude, and Dillon Hayes are meeting later this week to begin planning the Lake Health Conference.

6.3. Clean Water Partnership Grant Semi-Annual Report: Janet Smude shared copies of the CWP report that was submitted to the MCPA in January. This report is required and summarizes work done in the previous 6 months, and work planned for the next 6 months.

6.4. 2016 Aitkin County AIS Grant Ideas: The Group discussed potential ideas for another AIS Control Grant through Aitkin County. The following were mentioned: maintenance/repair of any damage to the signs, placemats, small brochures for the boxes, aquatic vegetation surveys (Big Pine Lake), booklet similar to the one prepared for Crow Wing County. Sheila Carleton offered to check on the price of printing the folders developed by Crow Wing County. Bob Williams and Janet Smude will put together a draft application based on this discussion. The deadline for the application is March 31st.

7. New Business:

7.1 Aitkin County Rivers and Lakes Fair: The Aitkin County Rivers and Lakes Fair is scheduled for Saturday June 18th at the High School in Aitkin. It will feature classroom presentations, booths and exhibits, and hands on activities – all related to water quality. Barb Eller offered to help out at the MLLWVG booth. The Macioch's will also be asked to help. A motion approving a \$ 300 contribution from the Clean Water Partnership Grant was made M/S/C Al Close / Barb Eller.

7.2. Looking Ahead – Future Coordinator Services: Janet Smude shared concerns about the amount of time needed to complete watershed activities. There are many more things that could be done to promote the watershed group and watershed health – but everything takes time. The group was asked for input on potentially hiring a full time coordinator. Potential grants were mentioned, as were job duties. A motion to proceed with exploring options for a coordinator was made M/S/C Bob Janzen / Barb Eller.

8. Subcommittee Reports:

8.1. Media Committee: We will be working with Red House Media to develop this campaign.

8.2. Fund Raising / Grant Writing: No additional information was shared.

8.3. Membership: No report was shared.

8.4. Citizen Comments / Member Comments: No additional comments were noted.

9. Agenda Additions: Laurie Westerlund shared information on the Fisheries Input Group. This is designed to gather citizen input regarding the Mille Lacs Lake Fishery. They have discussed hooking mortality, walleye stocking (no potential cost provided), forage shortage, and local comments regarding the fishery. It was noted that not everyone thinks last summer was a disaster on Mille Lacs. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday night at Izatzys. This is a difficult group to work with. Laurie was thanked for sharing the report.

10. Next Meeting: The next meeting was set for Monday, March 21st at 10:00 am. It will be held at the Hazelton Town Hall, if it is available. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm. M/S/C Laurie Westerlund / Al Close.